



THE SOCIETY FOR
THE ARTS IN DEMENTIA CARE

2005 Highlights:

Conference Objectives

- Provide a forum where academics and practitioners met to share recent findings and practical experiences and collaborate on innovative approaches.
- Promote dementia care that supports the philosophical approach of personhood.
- Share knowledge with the community at large.

We welcomed the participation of academics, researchers and practitioners at this conference.

Program Overview

- Two Keynote speakers
- Two panels, selected from submissions and invitees from researchers and practitioners in the community
- Workshops were open to academics and practitioners in the community
- Paper presentations in a lecture format
- Poster presentations
- Exhibition of art produced by seniors with dementia

Keynote Speakers

Susan McFadden, PhD

Professor, Chair of the Psychology Department, University of Wisconsin, Oshkosh

Cox-Bishop, PhD

Professor, Department of Human Ecology, University of Alberta

Advisory Committee

- Dr. Annalee Yassi, Director of the Institute of Health Promotion, UBC
- Dr. Jim Frankish, Associate Director, Institute of Health Promotion Research, UBC
- Dr. Rita Irwin, Head, Department of Curriculum Studies UBC
- Dr. Jeff Small, School of Audiology & Speech Sciences, UBC
- Dr. Marlene Cox-Bishop, Department of Human Ecology, University of Alberta
- Sheila Jones, International Wordsmiths

Organizing Committee

- Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka, Doctoral Student, Institute of Health Promotion Research, UBC
- Brenda Kwan, MSc, Research Assistant, Institute of Health Promotion Research, UBC
- Julieta Flores, BSc, Research Assistant, Institute of Health Promotion Research, UBC
- Yuriko Araki, MA Candidate, Gerontology Program, Simon Fraser University
- Mineo Tanaka, Architect, BCIT

Past Conferences Program

Friday, May 6th, 2005

7:30 am – 8:00 am Registration

8:00 am – 9:00 am Breakfast and Welcome by Dr. Annalee Yassi and Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka.

9:15 am – 9:45 am Keynote speech: Dementia, Creativity, and the "Defiant Power of the Human Spirit"

Susan McFadden, Ph.D.

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

9:45 am – 10:15 am

Melissa Lunsman, M.S. Graduate Student

Susan McFadden, Ph.D.

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Abstract Title: The Development of an Attitude toward Dementia Scale

In recent years, numerous programs have been designed to help people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD) maximize their creative expression and social skills; such programs are collectively termed "person-centered." Person-centered programs have been shown to benefit people with ARD, but less is known about the effects of such programming on public attitudes toward people with ARD. Increasingly, volunteers are participating in these programs, but their attitudes toward dementia have not been measured systematically. Current scales do exist on attitudes about aging and about disabilities in general, but these instruments lack items specific to ARD. This presentation will describe the development of a new, multidimensional Attitude toward Dementia scale that is occurring in three steps: structured interviews, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis with reliability and validity testing. Structured interviews with people with no experience with people with dementia, along with family and professional caregivers provided broad categories from which scale items were developed, tested, and refined. This scale, a work in progress, will be distributed and discussed at this session so participants can provide feedback. Upon completion, this project will provide a valuable tool for assessing the effects of volunteer participation, outreach programming, and educational workshops on attitude change.

10:15 am – 10:30 am Coffee break

10:30 am – 11:15 am

Margaret Crossley, PhD, Associate Professor

Shawnda Lanting, Lisa Lejbak and Patrick Corney, Graduate Students

Department of Psychology

University of Saskatchewan

Abstract Title: Neuropsychological Tests Modified to Incorporate Color, Humor and Familiar Objects and Scenes can Facilitate Cross-Cultural Dementia Assessment and Contribute to Differential Diagnosis

The Prairie Buschke and & Grasshoppers and Geese; are measures of episodic and semantic memory, respectively, that form part of a stream-lined neuropsychological battery designed for a Rural and Remote Memory Clinic that serves non-urban seniors, including Aboriginal patients. Tests were adapted from the original black-and-white line-drawn versions (Buschke Cued Recall; and Pyramids and Palm Trees;) by incorporating colorful images of the geography and culture of the prairie region, and humorous and pleasure-evoking stimuli. Test development was completed in consultation with a group of Aboriginal seniors, and normative and clinical data were generated through normal aging studies and Rural and Remote Memory Clinic referrals. Preliminary results indicate that these modified measures provide a valid assessment of episodic and semantic memory functions. Patients subsequently diagnosed with early-stage, probable Alzheimer disease displayed impaired episodic memory (Prairie Buschke) but performed relatively normally on the semantic memory measure (Grasshoppers and Geese). These tests elicited an unusually positive response in early AD patients, normal adults, and examiners, and high levels of engagement during test administration. In contrast, patients subsequently diagnosed with frontotemporal dementia performed more poorly on the semantic matching task (i.e., Grasshoppers and Geese) and were less engaged in the emotional content when compared to AD patients. We conclude that

neuropsychological tests designed for dementia assessment that incorporate colorful, familiar, and humorous images can contribute to cross-cultural assessment and differential diagnosis by utilizing preserved emotional responses to simple environmental stimuli evident in Alzheimer disease patients but impaired in some other forms of progressive dementia.

11:15 am – 12:00 pm

Nancy Mackin, Ph.D.

Landscape Architecture and Architecture
University of British Columbia

Abstract Title: Where Elders remember: the Nisga'a experience

The unique history-telling architectural legacy of Pacific Northwest Native peoples forms a case study here for the way culturally distinctive surroundings act as "aides memoires". Building on several years of research into oral cultures' architecture and landscape as keys to memory, additional workshops were held with sixteen Elders of the Nisga'a Nation from Northwestern British Columbia, Canada, at the invitation of the four Lisims (Nass) Valley communities. Elders confirmed that language, past events, technological skills, and other vitally important information is recalled, in part, through expressive surroundings including building exteriors, interiors, and surrounding landscapes. By contrast, when removed from the places that evoke memories, Elders attested that their story-telling abilities diminished, along with the ability to recall cultural and personal histories. Removals cited included forced attendance at residential school or being moved to culturally-neutral "Seniors' Care" facilities in urban settings away from the peoples homelands. Architectural forms extending back many millennia keep knowledge and wisdom alive across generations, explained the Elders: because buildings and landscape are more tangible and lasting than songs or other sound-based mnemonic devices, the information is not lost when people's memories are disturbed by difficult times, poor health, or cultural upheaval. While this research has important implications for landscape and architectural design teams and for those involved in seniors' housing policy-making, it may also provide new understanding for seemingly idiopathic occurrences of dementia among seniors who have lost direct contact with familiar and meaningful surroundings.

12:00 am – 1:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm – 1:45 pm Film Presentation: Creative Expression and Dementia

Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka, Ph.D. Student

University of British Columbia

Abstract Title: Sylvia: An Artist With Memory Impairment, A compelling Story of Creativity and Dementia

This presentation is based on Sylvia who is a remarkable 80-year-old artist and teacher who was diagnosed with dementia several years ago. It includes a film, which is based on her relationship with Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka, who engaged her in a program of creative expression activities over that time. Dalia, a PhD student with a master's degree in architecture, developed the program for a series of groups of seniors with dementia. This film tells the compelling story of Sylvia's love for the arts and her struggle to exercise her skills as long as possible, even while her remaining short and long-term memories fade. Although Sylvia searches for the right words, she still manages to convey her profound thoughts on the arts, on teaching art and on her engagement in creative self-expression. Her humor and positive attitude, in spite of her awareness of her disease, reminds all of us that we should not let our own preconceptions about illness blind us to the potential of the human spirit.

1:45 pm – 2:00 pm Coffee Break

2:00 pm – 5:00 pm Symposium: Personhood-Oriented Communication and Writing in Dementia.

Ellen B. Ryan, PhD, Symposium Chair
Professor Gerontology
McMaster Centre for Gerontological Studies
McMaster University

1- 5. Abstract Titles: Setting the Stage for Creativity in Conversation in Dementia with Personhood-Oriented Communication.

Marie Savundranayagam, Kerry Byrne, J.B. Orange
University of Western Ontario

One of the goals of creativity is the expression and support of the identity of individuals, often referred to as personhood or the concept of ‘the self’. The cognitive, communicative, linguistic, behavioural, and physical changes associated with dementia challenge the acknowledgment, elicitation and maintenance of identity, which, in turn, undermine creativity. Several researchers, including Kitwood and Sabat, identified social interaction as an integral component of identity acknowledgment and maintenance among individuals with dementia. They note that communication partners play a crucial role eliciting and supporting the identity of individuals with dementia through the use of effective, accommodated communication. This central role of partners is essential to a personhood-oriented approach to care of individuals with dementia. Personhood-oriented communication, within the context of creativity and identity, refers to the appropriate use of language- and communication-based strategies that provide opportunities for individuals with dementia to voice personal preferences, thoughts and emotions. We argue that personhood-centered communication, based on identity acknowledgment, elicitation and maintenance, is essential to bring forth and foster creativity in persons with dementia. Our paper will discuss key personhood-oriented conversational strategies derived from several empirical databases that illustrate how creativity and identity are elicited, acknowledged and supported by conversational partners of individuals with dementia.

2. Abstract Title: Thematic Dictation in Dementia: Letter-Writing as Metaphor for the Relationship Between Mother and Son
Lori Schindel Martin [Shalom Village], Vicky Bach [Shalom Village], and Ellen B. Ryan [McMaster University]

When the person with dementia is admitted to long-term care, the relationship between family members is altered forever. While in many instances the capacity for family members to sustain a connection is hindered by virtue of the dementia itself, this is only compounded when the separation is magnified by great geographical distance. There is a critical need for the development of relationship-building strategies that nurture and support a sense of connectedness between the person with dementia and their family caregivers. Thematic dictation is a co-constructed process that helps families maintain an emotional and spiritual bond despite being separated by the dementia itself and by geographical distance. Thematic dictation involves a communication exchange that is facilitated by a trusted staff member who becomes a conduit, messenger and writing partner, helping to strengthen the link between members of the family unit. This paper presentation will describe thematic dictation using a case study and letter samples that illustrate the potential of this process as a metaphor that honors and celebrates the history and richness of a wonderful relationship between a mother and son over a period of three years. It will also include the perspectives of the son, describing the impact of thematic diction on a relationship of deep value to him. In addition, the presentation will illustrate how thematic dictation is not just the act of reading and writing letters. Rather, thematic dictation becomes a metaphorical act of meaning-making, helping the person with dementia interpret a letter received from family in terms of the context of the relationship and its unique characteristics, both past and present.

3. Abstract Title: Facilitated life story writing by individuals with dementia for conversational remembering boxes.
Ellen B. Ryan, McMaster University

The Sheridan Elder Research Centre (SERC) is a unique applied research institute located at the Sheridan College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning in Oakville, Canada. The cornerstone of SERC is an Alzheimer Day Program operated by the Halton Victorian Order of Nurses (VON). This qualitative study based in the Day Program represents the beginning of an innovative college-university collaboration, with an emphasis on knowledge translation. It extends work by Ryan and colleagues on barriers and facilitators for intergenerational communication, story writing by healthy seniors, computers for seniors, and writing in dementia. The overarching goal in working with individuals with dementia is to maintain personhood by creatively enhancing communication. The specific purpose was to facilitate writing/sharing of life stories with computer support. University students worked with eight Day Program participants to write down their life stories. The printed stories were presented to the individuals and family caregivers as part of initial remembering boxes upon which to build. We discuss common themes emerging from the stories, highlighting the participants' storytelling skills. We offer some perspective on the challenges of introducing individuals with dementia to computers. Also included are follow-up data identifying how caregivers have continued working with their family member to expand the remembering boxes.

4. Abstract Title: Poetry-based communication groups for individuals with dementia

Michelle Liebrechts [Parkwood Hospital, London ON], Kerry Byrne [University of Western Ontario], Marie Savundranayagam [University of Western Ontario], and J. B. Orange [University of Western Ontario]

Recent autobiographical texts written and published by individuals with dementia illustrate a wealth of untapped creativity. Researchers have begun to probe the use of poetry to explore intact communication skills and to support social interactions among individuals with dementia and with their caregivers. This paper describes the outcomes of a project undertaken with a group of four to six individuals with moderate-to-severe stage dementia living on a special care unit in a long-term care hospital in London Ontario. One purpose of the poetry-based communication group was to improve social interactions for these participants by supporting meaningful communication. A second purpose was to enhance creativity by providing opportunities to use intact but rarely called upon skills. Poems were selected as the primary communication tool because they can be short, stimulate imagination and creativity, and facilitate the recollection of preserved memories that encourage reminiscence. Poetry-based communication group sessions were held weekly for forty-five to sixty minutes over a period of four months where participants with dementia read, discussed and created poems. The paper will present examples of poetry created by participants and discuss the relevance, importance and impact of such programming options for individuals with dementia and their caregivers.

5. Abstract Title: Writers with dementia: Creativity, coping, and contribution

**Ellen B. Ryan, Hendrika Spykerman, and Ann P. Anas
McMaster University**

“Although my body may still be sputtering along, the day will come when I can no longer write a clear sentence and tell a coherent story. That day will be the actual time of death. The person in me who lives on until natural death occurs is only a shadow left by the deadly laugh of Alzheimer's.” (DeBaggio, 2002, p. 117). Illness narratives published by individuals with dementia put eloquent faces on the diagnosis of Alzheimer disease and related dementias. Through analysis of selected narratives, we consider how people with dementia make use of reading and writing activities to enhance memory, satisfaction, self-esteem, and interpersonal communication. We highlight specific strategies offered by these authors for coping with losses in reading and writing. The courage and new learning involved in maintaining one's sense of self in dementia cannot be overestimated, and those who share their lived experiences through writing make a special contribution. These published writings illuminate objectives and pathways for others who may need more guidance. They provide hope concerning the extent of creativity, personal growth, and detailed insight available even in the midst of otherwise overwhelming losses. Once reading and writing activities are established as desirable and possible for individuals with dementia, a variety of approaches are available to facilitate them (as illustrated in the previous two papers).

5:30 pm Buffet dinner

Saturday, May 7th, 2005

7:30 am – 8:15 am Breakfast

8:30 am – 9:00 am Keynote speech: Elderly Individuals with Dementia: Creating Understanding and Meaning Through Art.

Marlene Cox-Bishop, PhD, Professor

Department of Human Ecology, University of Alberta

9:15 am – 11:30 am Presentations: Drama, Drumming, Story Telling and Dementia

9:15 am – 10:15 am

Ronald S. Penner, PhD (R. Psych.)

and Trudy Pauluth-Penner, B.F.A., M.Ed.

Applied Theatre Consulting Services

Victoria, B.C.

Ronald S. Penner, PhD (R. Psych.)

Abstract Title: Potential of applied theatre with seniors: Applications of reminiscence theatre for psychological adaptation and cognition.

In this paper we begin with an overview of the development of applied theatre and a synopsis of the literature on the benefits of engagement in the dramatic process. The relevance of applied theatre with seniors is discussed, with a summary of current programs, highlighting London's Age Exchange / Reminiscence Theatre and an emerging pilot project. Recommendations for a potential study are made, examining the effects of applied theatre on seniors' psychological adjustment and cognitive functioning. The study highlights how cognitive functioning could be assessed in the areas of memory and new learning, and creativity. Memory and new learning would be evaluated through the California Verbal Learning Test - Second Edition, and tests of mental flexibility (an aspect of creativity) through selected measures of the Delis-Kaplan Executive Function System. These instruments include norms throughout a wide age range through the 80-90 group, and with some measures including parallel forms useful for re-testing. In addition, this paper reviews how the qualitative and quantitative approaches to research can be integrated. Such a study would have relevance for professionals exploring memory changes with aging, in particular the dementia population, and how applied

theatre techniques affect their processes.

Trudy Pauluth-Penner, B.F.A., M.Ed.

Abstract Title: Applied Theatre: A Creative Process Towards Promoting Well-being For Seniors.

The purpose of this paper is to stimulate discourse among practitioners on applied theatre with seniors. Applied theatre is inherently interdisciplinary, both a source of benefit and challenge. The author begins with a synopsis of terms and distinctions pertaining to drama, and comments on the body of research supporting the value of drama applications in various contexts. A summary of Pam Schweitzer's London Age Exchange program is presented, this program having been the catalyst for a Vancouver Island based Reminiscence Theatre pilot project. Questions arising from the emerging data are discussed. The creative process holds the potential to enhance the quality of life for citizens in their later years, bridging the gap between generations and cultures. It is hoped that this paper will stimulate dialogue among practitioners considering the incorporation of Reminiscence Theatre into their practice. In essence, this paper reviews what applied theatre is, how it works, how it may benefit seniors, and the implications for ethical practice.

10:20 am – 11:20 am

Sienna Boothman, Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and National Trainer for the American Therapeutic Recreation Association's Dementia Practice Guidelines

Lulu Leathley, Professional Drum Group Facilitator, Orf Music Specialist, and Certified Health Rhythms Facilitator

Abstract Title: Tapping Into The Rhythm of Life: Drumming and Dementia

The Group Drumming program is a participatory music-making event using percussion instruments, songs and rhythm games. Objectives of the Group Drumming program are to increase feelings of belonging, to increase attention span, to provide an appropriate opportunity for cathartic outlet, and to facilitate creative expression, play, and pleasurable events for individuals with dementia. Participants are welcomed, gathered in a circle, and offered an egg shaker to begin the rhythm event with. Following some simple rhythm games, each participant is offered his/her choice of drum. Drum Story-Songs are used to cue the participants to play the drums to songs from their past. Visual cues are essential. Eye contact, body language, and mirroring are consistently used to encourage and enable everyone present to actively participate. Following the drum story-songs, percussion toys from around the world are given out to create a Soundscape. Participants utilize wood blocks, bells and shakers instead of words to participate in

telling stories and describing themes and events. Following the soundscape, Buffalo drums are passed out and participants play the heartbeat in an entrained rhythm as the group leader tells the Heartbeat Story. The program closes with a farewell song and an individual recognition of each person's contribution to the group. Observations of participants during this program include increases in positive affect, improved attention span, decreases in verbal and physical agitation, increases in active participation, memory recall of old-time songs and rhythms, and improved group socialization. Conclusions are that this program is an effective intervention for individuals with dementia.

11:20 am – 12:30 pm Lunch

12:30 pm – 12:35 pm Greetings from Dr. Anne Martin-Mathews, Scientific Director of the Institute of Aging, CIHR.

12:35 pm – 3:05 pm Presentations: Music, Dance, Singing and Dementia

12:40 pm – 1:10 pm

Melissa Jessop, MMT, MTA

Elmira, Ontario

Abstract Title: Finding The Music Within: Identifying a Model of Musical Self-Actualization with Individuals with Dementia

Music is at the core of musical self-actualization, which differentiates it from Maslow's definition of self-actualization. This presentation will include a definition and description of musical self-actualization, to describe a level of human experience, which persons with dementia may attain within a music therapy context. Clinical examples will be presented. An overview and description of music therapy techniques will be provided. Music therapy is the skillful use of music and musical elements by an accredited music therapist to promote, maintain, and restore mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health. Music has nonverbal, creative, structural, and emotional qualities. These are used in the therapeutic relationship to facilitate contact, interaction, self-awareness, learning, self-expression, communication, and personal development. (Canadian Association for Music Therapy, 1994)

A model of musical self-actualization will be presented, as well as a description of musical characteristics observed within a small music therapy group. Musical self-actualization is achieved through the direct properties of music and musical relationship, which can enable a person to transcend to a heightened level of human experience. The concept of musical self-actualization came from an initial 'hunch' - that something extraordinary and important was happening within music therapy sessions. The observations and discoveries that were unraveling fostered this belief until it seemed undeniable that persons with dementia may have the ability to become musically self-actualized in music therapy. Five manifestations of musical self-actualization are identified including the physical, cognitive, musical, communicative, and affective realms.

1:15 pm – 2:00 pm

Maria DuBois Genne, Artistic Director

Kairos Dance Theatre

Minneapolis, MN

Abstract Title: The Dancing Heart: Vital Elders Moving in Community

Through its program, "The Dancing Heart: Vital Elders Moving in Community," Kairos Dance Theatre offers older adults, their families, and caregivers an interactive, creative experience that combines opportunities for artistic expression and learning with the health-enhancing benefits of dance and music. Through short-term residencies and ongoing workshops, Kairos invites participants to experience the interweaving of dance and story, to redefine their beliefs about their physical and artistic abilities, and to join us as artistic collaborators in creating performances that we bring to diverse groups in the community. Maria DuBois Genne, Artistic Director and Kairos Associate, Catherine Baumgartner, will present an overview of "The Dancing Heart" through pictures and stories drawn from their weekly experiences with elders over the past three and one half years. They will share easily replicable activities for engaging elders in dance, music and story and give examples of how those artistic expressions can provide a bridge for creative expression even when language and memory have been affected. They will also introduce their new educational program/performance about Alzheimers disease that will weave together information about current research, inspiring stories of individuals and caregivers, and messages of hope.

2:00 pm – 2:30 pm.

Merrill Semple, R. SLP, SLP(C)

B.Sc., M.B.A., M.Mus.

Speech Language Pathologist, Lyric Soprano

Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital

Edmonton Alberta

Abstract Title: Singing, Communication and Dementia

Objectives:

The objective of this paper is to review the documented support and describe and demonstrate the practical benefits of "singing therapy" for persons with dementia. Tips on implementing individual or group treatment will be provided.

Description of program/intervention:

Weekly singing groups are provided as a joint venture between speech-language pathology and recreation therapy at the Northern Alberta Regional Geriatric Program in the Glenrose Rehabilitation Hospital, Edmonton, Alberta. The speech-language pathologist also uses singing on an individual basis in her treatment protocols.

Description of what was observed:

Communication breakdown is common in dementia. Singing can facilitate vocal expression, emotional release, trigger familiar memories, and act as a calming influence on dementia patients. Passive listening and active participation are possible within the same setting. Breath support, swallowing and vocal projection/quality and may also be enhanced.

Conclusions:

Singing provides an enjoyable way to enhance the communication, mood, respiratory health and swallowing in all persons in a care setting.

2:35 pm – 3:05 pm

Margaret Fulton, B.F.A, Adult Day Center

Joan Skeet, Program Worker, Adult Day Center

Janice Stanbury, MSN, Associate professor School of Nursing

Okanagan University, Kelowna

Abstract Title: Putting Theory into Practice: Using and an Abilities Enhancing Model to Foster Creativity in Clients with Dementia.

A recent change seen in adult day programs has seen the increased prevalence of admission of clients with significant physical and cognitive deficits. This change has presented adult day program staff at the Margaret Fulton Centre with the challenge of continuing

to provide diverse recreational and therapeutic programming that addresses these needs. To that end, the employees at this facility challenged themselves to focus on the promotion of clients' creativity and personal expression as a programming initiative. To be creative is defined as the ability to be imaginative, and inventive (Readers Digest-Oxford, 1996, p. 330). Expression is perceived as the act or an instance of expressing-such as facial expression, intonation of voice, movement, or language (Readers Digest-Oxford, 1996, p. 510). The desire and need to be creative lies within all of us, and we all want to be expressive in some way. Hobbies, music, writing and expressive physical activities all have the potential to give pleasure to one's life. But clients with dementia have obvious challenges that prevent them from enjoying such activities. As a result, caregivers need to seek out alternate ways of stimulating creativity and self-expression. To that end, staff at Margaret Fulton selected the Abilities Enhancing Model (Dawson, Kline and Wells, 1993) to frame their programming. For the staff, an abilities focus involved facilitating individuals' continued use of abilities and when abilities were lost, manipulating the centre's environment to compensate for deficits and support enhanced function. This paper will profile how a theoretical model fosters creativity and expression in clients with dementia. Some components of the creativity programming that now is available for the center's members will be outlined.

3:10 pm – 3:20 pm Coffee break

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm Panel Presentation: The Arts in Dementia Healthcare

**Moderator: Dalia Gottlieb-Tanaka, M. Arch., PhD Student,
University of British Columbia
Marlene Cox-Bishop, PhD, University of Alberta
Rita Irwin, PhD, University of British Columbia
Jim Frankish, PhD**